

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please amend the figures as shown in the enclosed replacement sheets. The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Figs. 1a and 1b. In particular, Figs. 1a and 1b have been amended to include reference numerals 78, 86 and 90.

REMARKS

Please reconsider this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application and for indicating that claims 7-9, 11, 16-18, 22-24, and 26 contain allowable subject matter.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-26 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 12, and 20 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 12, and 20.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 12, and 20 were amended in this response to include the limitations of claims 7, 16, and 23, respectively, which were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claims 7, 16, and 23 were therefore cancelled. Additionally, claim 1, 12, and 20 were amended to clarify and more thoroughly claim the elements recited as “members” and “bores.” The remaining claims were amended to correct antecedent basis support in view of the amendments and proper U.S. patent practice. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments as support may be found in the originally filed claims.

Amendments to the Specification

The specification is amended to clarify that the upper tubular member shown in Fig. 1(a) is a drilling liner running tool, and the lower tubular member shown in Fig. 1(b) is a drilling liner setting sleeve. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments, as support may be found in the Abstract as filed (*e.g.*, “A running tool (12) and a method of setting a liner in a well bore is also described...”), claim 12 as originally filed, and the paragraphs

starting at lines 15 and 25 on page 10 and the paragraph starting at line 31 on page 11 of the specification.

Objections to the Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) ("Rule 1.83") as failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the "running tool" and the "setting sleeve" as recited in claim 12 must be shown or the features cancelled from the claims. Additionally, the Examiner asserts that additional figures are needed to better illustrated the relationship between the circumferential profile of a portion of the connector as illustrated in Figs. 2(a) and 2(b) and the cross-sectional view of the downhole connector as illustrated in Figs. 1(a) and 1(b).

With respect to the Examiner's objection that the running tool and the setting sleeve are not show in the drawings, Applicant respectfully points out that the tool shown in Fig. 1(a) is a drilling liner running tool and the tool shown in Fig. 1(b) is a drilling liner setting sleeve. As indicated above, the specification has been amended to more clearly identify the upper and lower tubular members 12, 14, as the running tool and the setting sleeve, respectively. Therefore, Applicant submits that the running tool and the setting sleeve are shown in the original figures as filed. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

With respect to the Examiner's objection regarding the circumferential profile of the connector, Applicant submits herewith a corrected drawing sheet with amendments to Figs. 1(a) and 1(b). In particular, reference numerals 78, 86 and 90 have been added to the figures for clarity. From the figures, as amended, it is seen that the surface 78 of the running tool 12 engages the surface 90 of the setting sleeve 14 (each generally aligned with the longitudinal

axis), and the sloping surface 74 of the running tool 12 engages the sloping surface 86 of the setting sleeve 14. Additionally, Figs. 2(a) and 2(b) show the raised portions 24, 64 of the tubular members 12 and 14, respectively, in greater detail. In view of the above, Applicant believes that the circumferential profile portion of the connectors is thoroughly described and shown in the figures as required by Rule 1.83. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 1, 12, and 20 stand objected to because the Examiner asserts it is difficult to interpret what the phrases “on part engagement” as recited in claims 1, 12, and 20. Additionally, the Examiner suggests that the following phrases be amended to better distinguish between those elements associated with the first tubular member and those associated with the second tubular member: claims 1, 12, and 20, the phrases “a member,” “the member,” and “the bore.” Claims 1, 12, and 20 have been amended in this reply to clarify these phrases. Accordingly, withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 12-14, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,837,639 (“Wickersham”). Claims 1 and 12 have been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention recited. To the extent that this rejection may still apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 7, which the Examiner indicated contained allowable subject matter. Further, claim 12 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 16, which the Examiner also indicated as containing allowable

subject matter. Thus, claims 1 and 12, as amended, are allowable over Wickersham. Dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

A. Claims 2, 15, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wickersham in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0167173 ("Griffin"). Independent claims 1, 15, and 20 have been amended in this reply. To the extent that this rejection may still apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 7, which the Examiner indicated contained allowable subject matter. Claim 12 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 16, which the Examiner also indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Further, claim 20 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 23, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Thus, claims 1, 12, and 20 as amended, are allowable over Wickersham in view of Griffin. Dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

B. Claim 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wickersham in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,885,225 ("Rollins"). Claims 3-6 depend from independent claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended in this reply. To the extent that this rejection may apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 7. Thus, amended independent claim 1 and dependent claims 3-6 are allowable. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

C. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wickersham in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,503,183 ("Simmons"). Claim 10 depends from claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended in this reply. To the extent that this rejection may apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 7. Thus, amended independent claim 1 and dependent claim 10 are allowable. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

D. Claims 20 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wickersham. Claim 20 has been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention recited. To the extent that this rejection may apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 20 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 23, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Thus, amended independent claim 20 is patentable over Wickersham. Dependent claim 25 is allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 17172/034001).

Dated: December 29, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By *Lisa Lichtenauer*
for Jeffrey S. Bergman *Lisa Lichtenauer*
Registration No.: 45,925 *57,123*
OSHA · LIANG LLP
909 Fannin Street, Suite 3500
Houston, Texas 77010
(713) 228-8600
(713) 228-8778 (Fax)
Attorney for Applicant

Attachments